

P O S T S C R I P T

TO THE

REAL GROUNDS

OF THE

P R E S E N T W A R

WITH

F R A N C E,

SUGGESTED BY RECENT EVENTS.

By JOHN BOWLES, Esq.

L O N D O N :

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1801



POSTSCRIPT.

THE circumstances which gave rise to the present War are so novel and unprecedented, that some persons have attempted to infer that it is not attended with any precise object; and those who were for endeavouring to avert it by the entire sacrifice of our dignity, honour, and national consequence, begin to be clamorous for its conclusion, now that the French are driven out of Holland and the Austrian Netherlands. But it is impossible to advert to the transactions which preceded, and the causes which produced the War, without seeing that it has an object as precise as it is important, and that this object is neither more nor less than SECURITY. But as *partial* security cannot exist, we are interested in providing for *that* of all Europe against the restless, turbulent, and incendiary spirit of French Revolutionists.

IN pursuit of so important an object, one thing is extremely plain, that the security we seek to establish can never be obtained until there be some regular, stable, and efficient government in

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France.

France. The unprincipled, tumultuary, and unorganized factions which domineer at present over that unfortunate country, can never be admitted as parties in any treaty by which the rights, interests, and tranquillity of nations are to be regulated and secured. After assuming a power superior to the obligation of treaties, how can they be depended upon for the performance of any terms into which they might enter? After denying, both in their principles and their conduct, the authority of the law of nations, to what sanction could any stipulations made by them be referred but their own arbitrary and capricious will? It would be the merest farce to treat with a Power which avows no other rule of conduct than "*Sic volo—sic jubeo—set pro ratione voluntas.*" The strong and numerous proofs they have given of their perfidy, of their entire disregard to every principle of honour and justice, and to every established form and rule, must debar them of all confidence with civilized States. Besides, with what dignity, with what decency, could any Government negotiate with men whose lives are due to Justice for the most atrocious offences that have ever stained the annals of the world?—with a set of banditti who have been the scourge, not only of their own country but of the whole human race, and who hold their illegitimate power by a
tenure

tenure as precarious as it is unjust? What would be the effect of a peace concluded with such men, but to leave them at liberty to resume their revolutionary schemes, their incendiary conspiracies, and their projects of universal confusion? Were it possible for Great Britain to have the baseness to withdraw herself from the confederacy of which she forms a part, and of which she ought to be the animating soul, before the grand object of general security be attained, the common foe would instantly derive fresh courage and vigour, the horrid baneful cause of Gallic Liberty and Equality would revive, and savage Fraternity would again expand its destructive arms to embrace distant regions in its fatal clasp. Such dangers must not be permitted to recur; hereafter they might not be so effectually resisted as they may now. The advantages already obtained, far from inclining us to relax, should stimulate us to such further exertions as may eradicate the evil, which is as contagious as it is malignant.

NOTHING, in short, can warrant us to expect that security and tranquillity which have been so much endangered, but the entire downfall of that anarchical Power, which being erected in

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France

France upon the ruins of Government and order, seeks to extend its Empire over the Globe; and which, among the calamities produced by it, has excited a general War. To sheath the sword before that Power is completely demolished would be to confirm its authority, to strengthen its influence, and to invite its ravages. No terms can be made with a Power, the existence of which is incompatible with the safety of the rest of the world; and which, wherever it resides, must be the centre of confusion and the focus of anarchy. But to suffer it to be established in a country like France, and to have the resources of such a country at its command, would be to set at defiance the plainest dictates of wisdom, and the most forcible suggestions of experience.

THE doctrine now contended for by no means implies a right in one country to interfere in the internal concerns of another. But France has adopted a system which is as mischievous to her neighbours as to herself; a system, in which the rights and interests of other nations are not only inseparably interwoven with her own, but are also made subservient

servient to her will. It therefore behoves other nations, in their own defence, to destroy that system root and branch ; and by so doing they no more assume a right of regulating the internal affairs of France, than a man who extinguishes a fire in a house adjoining to his own can be said to regulate the domestic concerns of his neighbour's family.

EVENTS which have very recently occurred, afford reason to hope, that a door is at length open for a restoration of order to France and tranquillity to Europe. The reverse of such events would probably have taken place if Great Britain had not co-operated in the important work. But no thanks are due to those who would have conciliated the regards of the Convention, that the honour of this country is not deeply wounded by the presence of an English Ambassador, at such a moment as this, at Paris. After having witnessed the savage murder of the French Monarch, the Representative of the British Crown might now, perhaps, have been hesitating whether he should tarry with the monsters of the Convention, to prop their falling tyranny, or flee from the approach of Order and Government,

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to hide his blushes (if blush he could) for his Sovereign, his Country, and himself. If this kingdom had formed bonds of amity with that barbarous assemblage, its alliance would have ceased to be respectable, and would have attracted the scorn and contempt of every other Power in Europe. The case of Cromwell has been much relied on to justify the abasing proposal to recognize the nominal Republic of France. But Cromwell, though an usurper, knew how to make his own Government respected, and to respect other Governments; in both which particulars he widely differed from the usurpers of France.

THE important moment appears to be arrived for France to realize the dear-bought experience of the last four years, and the great and rapid successes of the Combined Arms seem to promise a deliverance to the French people from their fell and sanguinary tyrants. Many, very many years must indeed elapse before the ravages of the Revolution can be repaired; and generations yet unborn will taste the bitter fruits of the pestiferous tree of Liberty. The business, however, of the present moment is as arduous as it is important, and the labour of establishing order in France may be truly stiled Herculean.

MISCHIEFS

MISCHIEFS of an enormous magnitude are to be removed—but that is not all; the greatest caution is necessary to prevent their being reproduced. It will not avail to do away consequences, if causes be suffered to remain. The evil must therefore be traced to its source—the wound must be probed to the bottom, and a radical cure must be begun before France can be in a state of convalescence. The present horrid Convention grew out of a Legislative Assembly, and *that* out of a Constituent Assembly; and *that* paved the way for all the evils which have followed by the adoption and propagation of principles destructive of all order and government, and incompatible with a state of society *. The wild speculations, the baneful philosophy, disseminated with such industry at the commencement of the Revolution, were the germ of all those miseries and horrors which have since grown up in so plenteous a crop. A Declaration of visionary, absurd, and impracticable Rights has been the Charter of Licentiousness and Anarchy; and the attempt to realize the preposterous notion, that the sovereignty resides in the people, and can be exercised by them, has, as might have been expected, given

* The attachment of these mushroom and self-constituted Legislators to their crude and fanciful systems was remarkably exemplified in an expression of one of the leading Members of the Legislative Assembly, viz. *Perissent plutôt les colonies qu'un prince*.—Rather let the colonies perish than a single principle.—After this, who can be surprized at the calamities of France?

rise to the most cruel and oppressive tyranny that ever existed. In order to provide for the future happiness of France, the road that led to her present misery must be studiously avoided. The same causes would again produce the same effects, and it would be in vain that the Convention were extirpated, if any thing like the preceding assemblies were restored, or their principles adopted. It would be in vain the heads of the Hydra were cut off; other heads would soon sprout up still more voracious than their predecessors: the vitals of the monster must be pierced, and its renovating power destroyed—the whole fabrick of the Revolution must be demolished, its foundations razed, and the rubbish removed—Departments, Districts, Municipalities, Sections and Clubs, the whole system, in short, of organized disorder must be swept away, before France can begin to recover her tranquillity or recruit her natural strength. The ancient division, the provincial boundaries of France must be restored—an immense debt of justice must be discharged both to the oppressor and the oppressed—the fictitious Rights of Man must give way to the real Rights of Nature and the Duties of Subjects—the voice of Religion must be once more revered—the sanctions of Morality must be enforced—the Throne and the Altar must be re-erected—society must be again arranged in due
grada-

gradations, its various ascending ranks and orders must be replaced, and a Power must be established of sufficient strength to connect the whole, and to maintain the parts in their proper places.

It seems almost incredible that any person should be now desirous of resorting to the speculative Constitution framed by the National Assembly in the year 1789;—a Constitution which was the mere fabrick of fancy, formed upon no model of experience, plentifully glossed over indeed with metaphysical varnish, but so loose, disjointed, and inapplicable, that it fell to pieces as soon as it was tried;—a Constitution in which we see a separation of the parts of Government, without either a connecting or a balancing principle; an Executive Magistrate without strength to enforce the execution of the laws; a Monarchy without means of defending the Crown; and a phantom of Royalty set up to be insulted and degraded at the pleasure of the multitude;—in short, a Constitution, which, besides its practical defects, was founded upon the absurd principle, that those to govern should be subordinate, and those to be governed, supreme. It required no great degree of discernment to

discover at once that such a system, like an inverted pyramid, would quickly fall. But after the experiment has failed, after it has not only failed but been followed by such tremendous consequences, what friend to Humanity would wish to see it repeated? The people of France, corrupted as they now are by habits of licentiousness and insubordination, and inured to every species of violence and crime, are surely much less calculated than they were four years ago for so feeble and discordant a system of Government.

INSTEAD, therefore, of pretending, like DUMOURIER, to find a rallying point in the absurd and mischievous reveries of the first Legislative Assembly (or indeed anywhere within the whole compass of the Revolution) the real friends to their country will ardently desire the restoration of their ancient Monarchy, as affording the only chance for a return of repose, harmony, and subjection to the Laws. There is no danger that the abuses, which undoubtedly existed, should be re-established with the Monarchy; they received
their

their death-blow before the Revolution, and their return would only abstract from the vigour and energy of the Crown, so necessary at the present crisis. In the mandates (*cabiers*) presented by the Nation to their Representatives, before the meeting of the States-General, will be found an ample provision against the then subsisting abuses. Those mandates (the last act by which the nation expressed its calm, free, and rational will) were calculated to have produced the happiness and the freedom of France; but the double representation of the Commons, (that rash and ruinous project of NECKER, supported by the DUKE of ORLEANS) while it was a direct violation of the ancient Constitution, let in a torrent of popular frenzy which swallowed up the Nobility and Clergy, and, bearing down all before it, entirely subverted the Government, and at length involved the country in its present state of wretchedness and ruin. The sober genuine voice of the people, as uttered by their mandates, was then totally disregarded. It still, however, seems to call for attention—it still speaks, and, in accents the most emphatic,

phatic, declares it to have been the united and deliberate sentiment of the whole nation, before the minds of the multitude were deluded and their passions excited, that *the Monarchy, as established for ages, and relieved from those abuses which the patriotic Louis was so anxious to extirpate, was essential to the honour and happiness of France.*

FOR the restoration of that brilliant and vigorous Monarchy, so long the pride and adoration of the people, will every good and virtuous Frenchman pant with enthusiastic ardor, as the only possible means of rescuing his country from that abyss of misery into which she is plunged. To the same object will the wishes of every friend to humanity be directed, as alone capable of establishing that order in France which has been proved to be indispensable to the tranquillity and security of Europe.

UNTIL the accomplishment of that important event, it will be in vain to hope for the entire and necessary destruction of that **REVOLUTIONARY POWER** which has menaced and defied the whole
world

world—which has endangered the rights of every PROPRIETOR IN EUROPE—which was preparing a mine to blow up the Government and the Church of every country—which aimed at the universal disorganization of society—and which, finally, has kindled a general War, in which so many States have been compelled to engage, not merely in defence of their honour, but for the preservation of their existence.



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